

990

News

United States
Department
of Labor

Bureau of Labor Statistics

Washington, D.C. 20212

Technical information: (202) 523-1002
523-1024

USDL 91-74

Media contact: 523-1913

FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATE
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1991

STATE AND REGIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT IN 1990

Annual average unemployment rates were higher in 1990 than in 1989 for 27 states and the District of Columbia, according to the estimates released today by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor. Rates decreased over the year in 20 states and were unchanged in three states. Nationally, the civilian worker unemployment rate rose from an average of 5.3 percent in 1989 to 5.5 percent last year, reversing the steady decline which had been evident from 1983 through 1989.

The convergence of regional and division unemployment rates towards the national average, which was noted in 1989, continued in 1990. Unemployment rates among the four major regions were in a very narrow range in 1990--from 5.3 percent in the Northeast to 5.6 percent in both the South and Midwest. In contrast, the 1989 rates ranged from 4.5 percent in the Northeast to 5.7 percent in the South; in 1988, the range was even wider--from 4.0 percent in the Northeast to 6.1 percent in the South.

Among the nine divisions, the sharpest labor market changes occurred over the past 2 years in those which had had the highest and lowest unemployment rates in 1988. In New England, where the economy weakened markedly, the jobless rate rose from 3.1 percent in 1988 to 3.9 percent in 1989 and then jumped to 5.7 percent in 1990. At the other extreme, in the heavily oil and gas dependent states of the West South Central division--Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas--the rate fell from 7.8 to 6.8 percent and then to 6.2 percent. Despite this drop, the West South Central states still had the highest rate of the nine divisions in 1990. The lowest rate last year was in the heavily agricultural West North Central division--Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota--4.6 percent.

The narrowing range of regional unemployment rates towards the national average reflected marked movements among the states. In 1990, 24 states had unemployment rates between 5.0 and 6.0 percent. (See map.) In 1988, when the national average was also 5.5 percent, only 15 states were in the same narrow band. Last year, only three states--West Virginia, Mississippi, and Michigan--had unemployment rates of 7.0 percent or higher, whereas, in 1988, 11 states had rates that high. Unemployment rates of 4.0 percent or less were registered in three Great Plains states and Hawaii in 1990. Two years earlier, very low rates were evident in all six New England states, three other Atlantic Coast states, and Nebraska, South Dakota, and Hawaii.

L2. 120/2:

Despite the increase in unemployment nationally, sizable decreases did take place in several states between 1989 and 1990. In Louisiana, the rate dropped from 7.9 to 6.2 percent, and large decreases also occurred in Washington, Nebraska, and Wyoming. Nebraska, at 2.2 percent, was the state with the lowest unemployment rate in 1990. The largest year-to-year increases occurred in the New England states, with Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts all experiencing jumps of more than 2 percentage points.

All estimates presented in this release, except those for Puerto Rico, were derived from the Current Population Survey, a sample survey of about 60,000 households conducted monthly for the Bureau of Labor Statistics by the Bureau of the Census. A description of the survey and information about the reliability of the state estimates appear in Geographic Profile of Employment and Unemployment, 1989, Bulletin 2361.

Table 1. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years of age and over by region, division, and state, 1989-90 annual averages

(Numbers in thousands)

Region, division, and state	Population		Civilian labor force		Employed		Unemployed		Unemployment rate		Error range of rate, 1990 ^{1/}	
	1989	1990	1989	1990	1989	1990	1989	1990	1989	1990		
United States ^{2/}	186,393	188,049	123,869	124,787	117,342	117,914	6,528	6,874	5.3	5.5	5.4	- 5.6
Northeast.....	39,304	39,348	25,528	25,667	24,387	24,300	1,141	1,370	4.5	5.3	5.2	- 5.5
New England.....	10,099	10,131	7,001	7,045	6,730	6,648	271	399	3.9	5.7	5.4	- 5.9
Connecticut.....	2,515	2,512	1,761	1,789	1,697	1,698	64	91	3.7	5.1	4.4	- 5.7
Maine.....	928	940	616	635	590	603	25	33	4.1	5.1	4.6	- 5.8
Massachusetts.....	4,618	4,620	3,180	3,166	3,053	2,977	127	189	4.0	6.0	5.6	- 6.3
New Hampshire.....	838	851	611	630	589	595	21	36	3.5	5.6	5.0	- 6.4
Rhode Island.....	770	771	525	516	504	481	21	35	4.1	6.7	6.0	- 7.5
Vermont.....	430	437	307	309	296	294	11	15	3.7	5.0	4.2	- 5.5
Middle Atlantic.....	29,205	29,217	18,527	18,622	17,657	17,652	870	971	4.7	5.2	5.0	- 5.4
New Jersey.....	6,032	6,028	3,989	4,048	3,826	3,846	163	202	4.1	5.0	4.7	- 5.3
New York.....	13,806	13,801	8,681	8,673	8,238	8,223	442	451	5.1	5.2	4.9	- 5.5
Pennsylvania.....	9,367	9,388	5,857	5,901	5,592	5,583	264	318	4.5	5.4	5.1	- 5.7
Midwest.....	45,345	45,508	30,775	30,817	29,123	29,100	1,651	1,716	5.4	5.6	5.4	- 5.7
East North Central.....	31,966	32,087	21,516	21,459	20,280	20,173	1,236	1,285	5.7	6.0	5.8	- 6.2
Illinois.....	8,833	8,873	6,015	6,029	5,656	5,658	359	371	6.0	6.2	5.8	- 6.5
Indiana.....	4,217	4,241	2,801	2,832	2,744	2,682	136	150	4.7	5.3	4.6	- 6.0
Michigan.....	6,985	7,000	4,592	4,578	4,267	4,233	326	344	7.1	7.5	7.1	- 7.9
Ohio.....	8,262	8,285	5,419	5,433	5,118	5,126	300	307	5.5	5.7	5.3	- 6.0
Wisconsin.....	3,669	3,688	2,611	2,587	2,497	2,474	114	113	4.4	4.4	3.8	- 5.0
West North Central.....	13,379	13,421	9,259	9,358	8,843	8,927	416	431	4.5	4.6	4.3	- 4.9
Iowa.....	2,154	2,158	1,513	1,496	1,448	1,433	65	63	4.3	4.2	3.6	- 4.8
Kansas.....	1,854	1,860	1,284	1,300	1,233	1,243	52	57	4.0	4.4	3.8	- 5.0
Minnesota.....	3,269	3,293	2,343	2,404	2,241	2,288	102	116	4.3	4.8	4.2	- 5.4
Missouri.....	3,911	3,921	2,614	2,634	2,471	2,483	143	151	5.5	5.7	5.0	- 6.4
Nebraska.....	1,194	1,197	812	839	787	821	25	18	3.1	2.2	1.7	- 2.5
North Dakota.....	478	473	331	325	317	312	14	13	4.3	3.9	3.4	- 4.6
South Dakota.....	519	519	361	360	346	347	15	13	4.2	3.7	3.1	- 4.1
South.....	63,658	64,347	41,749	42,099	39,377	39,725	2,373	2,377	5.7	5.6	5.5	- 5.8
South Atlantic.....	32,592	33,070	21,589	21,869	20,555	20,740	1,034	1,131	4.8	5.2	5.0	- 5.4
Delaware.....	509	518	362	362	349	344	13	19	3.5	5.1	4.6	- 5.9
District of Columbia.....	454	441	315	298	299	278	16	20	5.0	6.6	5.9	- 7.5
Florida.....	9,891	10,121	6,193	6,365	5,845	5,987	348	378	5.6	5.9	5.6	- 6.3
Georgia.....	4,700	4,763	3,195	3,216	3,018	3,041	177	175	5.5	5.4	4.8	- 6.1
Maryland.....	3,557	3,600	2,523	2,535	2,430	2,417	93	118	3.7	4.6	4.0	- 5.3
North Carolina.....	4,938	4,999	3,391	3,401	3,272	3,262	119	139	3.5	4.1	3.8	- 4.4
South Carolina.....	2,566	2,599	1,695	1,724	1,615	1,643	80	81	4.7	4.7	4.1	- 5.3
Virginia.....	4,546	4,607	3,145	3,196	3,023	3,060	123	137	3.9	4.3	3.7	- 4.8
West Virginia.....	1,431	1,422	767	772	701	708	66	64	8.6	8.3	7.4	- 9.2
East South Central.....	11,516	11,575	7,184	7,240	6,730	6,795	454	444	6.3	6.1	5.8	- 6.5
Alabama.....	3,073	3,088	1,907	1,892	1,773	1,764	134	128	7.0	6.8	6.0	- 7.6
Kentucky.....	2,797	2,803	1,742	1,767	1,634	1,664	108	103	6.2	5.8	5.1	- 6.6
Mississippi.....	1,893	1,901	1,166	1,184	1,076	1,095	91	88	7.8	7.5	6.6	- 8.2
Tennessee.....	3,753	3,783	2,368	2,397	2,247	2,272	121	125	5.1	5.2	4.5	- 5.9
West South Central.....	19,550	19,702	12,976	12,990	12,092	12,190	884	802	6.8	6.2	5.9	- 6.4
Arkansas.....	1,791	1,797	1,135	1,133	1,053	1,056	82	78	7.2	6.9	6.1	- 7.7
Louisiana.....	3,156	3,144	1,900	1,874	1,749	1,758	151	117	7.9	6.2	5.5	- 7.0
Oklahoma.....	2,386	2,390	1,523	1,540	1,438	1,454	85	86	5.6	5.6	4.9	- 6.2
Texas.....	12,217	12,371	8,427	8,443	7,859	7,922	567	521	6.7	6.2	5.8	- 6.5
West.....	38,106	38,847	25,843	26,205	24,476	24,790	1,367	1,413	5.3	5.4	5.2	- 5.6
Mountain.....	9,791	9,924	6,622	6,744	6,258	6,391	364	353	5.5	5.2	5.0	- 5.5
Arizona.....	2,618	2,662	1,707	1,726	1,617	1,634	89	92	5.2	5.3	4.7	- 6.0
Colorado.....	2,460	2,475	1,695	1,756	1,597	1,669	98	87	5.8	4.9	4.3	- 5.6
Idaho.....	726	735	489	496	464	467	25	29	5.1	5.8	5.1	- 6.6
Montana.....	596	597	405	402	381	379	24	23	5.9	5.8	5.0	- 6.5
Nevada.....	841	881	602	626	572	595	30	31	5.0	4.9	4.3	- 5.6
New Mexico.....	1,096	1,108	698	700	651	656	46	44	6.7	6.3	5.6	- 7.0
Utah.....	1,110	1,123	789	792	752	758	37	34	4.6	4.3	3.7	- 4.9
Wyoming.....	344	343	239	246	224	233	5	13	6.3	5.4	4.6	- 6.0
Pacific.....	28,315	28,923	19,221	19,461	18,218	18,399	1,003	1,060	5.2	5.4	5.2	- 5.7
Alaska.....	350	353	253	257	236	239	17	18	6.7	6.9	6.3	- 7.8
California.....	21,460	21,939	14,518	14,670	13,780	13,846	737	823	5.1	5.6	5.4	- 5.9
Hawaii.....	790	803	525	539	511	524	13	15	2.6	2.8	2.3	- 3.3
Oregon.....	2,160	2,197	1,475	1,492	1,391	1,409	84	82	5.7	5.5	4.8	- 6.2
Washington.....	3,555	3,631	2,451	2,503	2,300	2,381	151	122	6.2	4.9	4.3	- 5.5
Puerto Rico ^{3/}	2,339	2,400	1,063	1,072	907	920	155	152	14.6	14.2	(4)	

^{1/} Error ranges are shown at the 90-percent confidence level.

^{2/} Because of separate processing and weighting procedures, totals for the United States differ from the results obtained by aggregating the data for regions, divisions, or states. Moreover, due to independent population adjustments, data for geographic components may not add to totals for larger geographic areas.

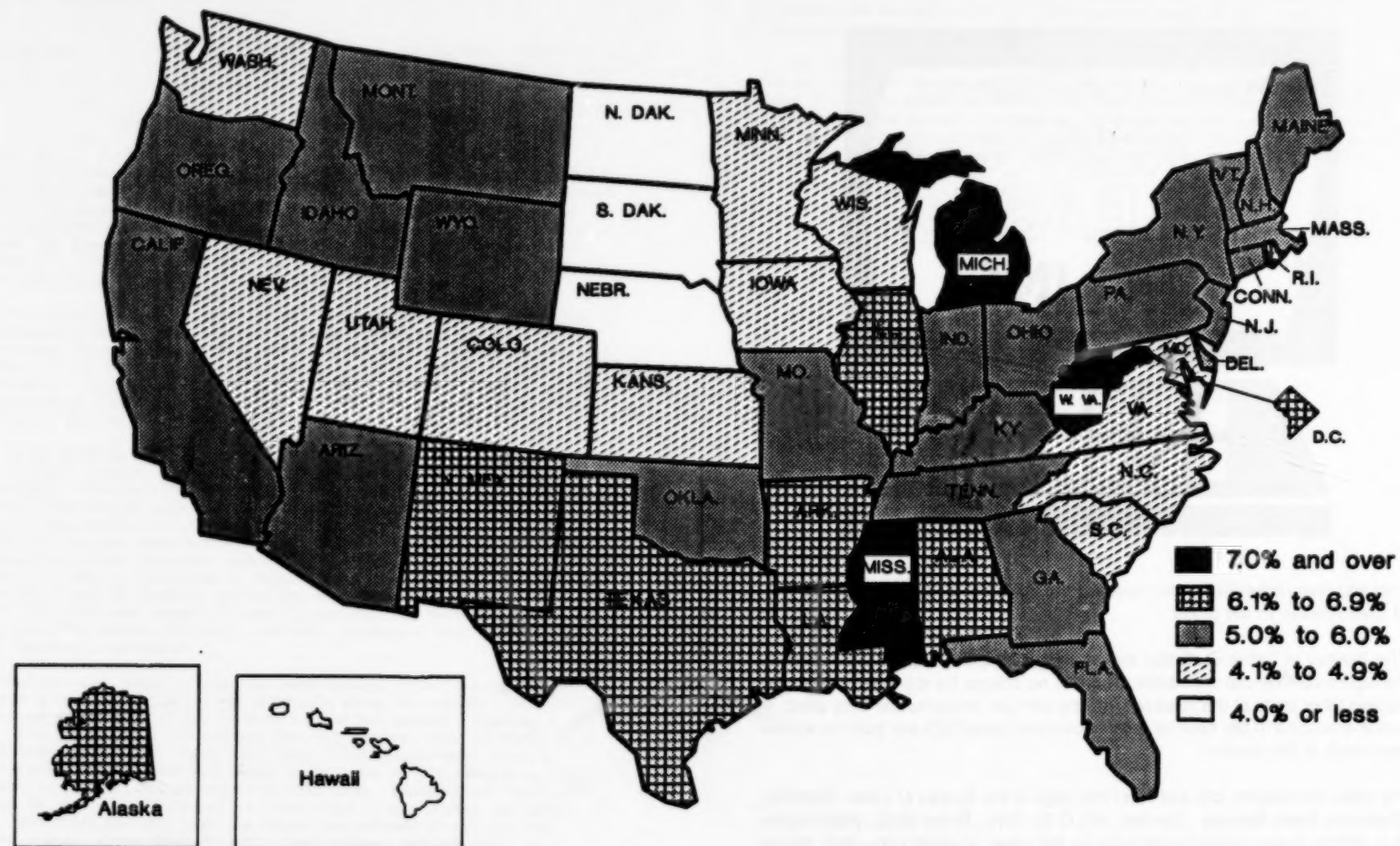
^{3/} The source of these data is the Employment Security Agency of Puerto Rico.

^{4/} Not available.

NOTE: Sub-national data for 1989-90 have not been subject to the revision that normally occurs at the end of each year because updated population estimates are not yet available.

Unemployment rates by state, 1990 annual averages

(U.S. average = 5.5 percent)





This and many other BLS news releases are available electronically at the time of their release to the press.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics makes its principal releases available online through a commercial contractor. There is no charge for the data. Users may access all or parts of the releases, paying only for the computer time used, at a rate of about \$10 per hour for local access and about \$25 per hour for access anywhere in the country.

For more information, clip and send this page to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Electronic News Release Service, 441 G St. N.W., Room 2822, Washington, D.C. 20212. If your mailing label is not on this page, or needs correction, please provide your current mailing address.

U.S. Department of Labor
Bureau of Labor Statistics
Washington, DC 20212

Official Business
Penalty for Private use, \$300

FIRST CLASS MAIL
Postage and Fees Paid
U.S. Department of Labor
Permit No. G-738